



**TOWN OF GRAFTON**  
**GRAFTON PUBLIC SCHOOLS**  
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GRAFTON, MA

2022 FEB 15 AM 8:36

**MINUTES**  
**SCHOOL COMMITTEE**

December 14, 2021  
Grafton Municipal Center – Room F  
7:00 p.m.

**Members Present:** Amy Marr, Chair  
Laura Often, Vice Chair  
Liz Spinney, Secretary  
Jennifer Connelly, Member

**Members Absent:** Rahul Rathi, Member

**Also Present:** James Cummings, Superintendent of Schools

1. Call to Order: At 7:00 p.m, Chair Amy Marr opened the meeting with a moment of reflection to commemorate the 9 year anniversary of the Sandy Hook tragedy.
2. Public Comment: n/a
3. General Business:
  - A. Honoring Nursing Staff: Dr. Cummings honored the nursing staff for their tireless efforts during the pandemic. Tim Fauth presented Jackie Davis with the Lifechanger of the Year Certificate of Excellence.

**B. Literacy Update: Lisa Rice, Literacy Coordinator**

The simple view of reading: decoding and language comprehension = reading comprehension. Scarborough's Reading Rope - decoding, phonological awareness, sight recognition, vocabulary knowledge, background knowledge, language structures, literacy knowledge, verbal reasoning all contributes to word recognition and language comprehension which leads to skilled reading. Literacy Programming includes Heggerty Phonemic Awareness for K & 1, Foundations (preK-3), Project Read - Written Expression (K-6), Daily Five //CAFE. Screeners and assessments include Dibels, RAN/RAS, Quick Spelling Survey (grades 2-5), Benchmark Assessment Survey.

Through the years, GPS has switched assessment tool moving from Reading A-Z to Fountas and Pinnell Benchmark, continued to use the latest DIBELS assessment and progress monitoring tools, added interventionists at the Kindergarten level, added a 1.0 literacy specialist position which has allowed for coaching at NS and MS, Heggerty

added in K and 1, Heggerty products added in SPED and reading programming grades 2+, added Foundations SPED reading decision tree, added Edmark and LindaMood Bell to SPED programming, added summer reading programming when needed, sent parent reading data letters, added the quick spelling survey to the assessment calendar for grades 2-5, revised the reading intervention (Tier 2) instructional framework and added Project Read - Written Expression.

Professional Development for Literacy Staff:

- 18 Certified Wilson certified teachers
- Many sped and reading specialists have attended LindaMood Bell trainings
- 21 teachers attended the virtual International Dyslexia Association conference
- Dyslexia professional development for paras
- Project read - Written Expression training

The literacy team continues to support staff through Make and Take Tuesdays, recess meetings, resource development, SST and intervention guidance, 1:1 meetings, grade level team support, visit a colleague, model lessons and data meetings. The literacy team rolled out the MA Dyslexia guidelines to appropriate staff, conducted an “audit” of GPS programming compared to the guidelines, Rapid Automatized Naming part of K fall assessments, DIBELS 8th edition for students K-6, provide appropriate, systematic and explicit instruction / interventions ( Wilson, Heggerty etc.) and progress monitor. Lisa Rice will be holding a parent seminar called *Understanding Literacy Instruction: A Parent Workshop Focusing on our Youngest Readers* on Monday January 10 7-8 at NGES and Tuesday, January 11 from 7-8 virtually.

Liz Spinney asked about the impact from COVID in regards to literacy. Literacy has been maintained but there are pockets of students who need additional support. Does the literacy department have what they need in terms of books? Yes but they are considering adding some decoding books to the libraries. What does it mean to be Wilson Certified? Wilson Certification is an expensive, 90 hours of online instruction and then a practicum with 5 observations with someone from Wilson. It is a huge accomplishment that the district has 18 certified teachers. What do you do with the results from the quick spelling surveys? The data is used to group students. Lisa Rice said that their success is a team effort and she appreciates the support from the administration.

C. GHS Innovation and College Partnerships: Kevin Carney and Karen Miele  
GHS launched partnership with QCC in Fall 2020, was slated for a Spring launch but expedited given the pandemic. Karen Miele is a licensed higher education teacher through GHS and coordinates the internship program.

Overarching Questions:

- What are we doing to best prepare our students for college and careers?  
What are we doing to address social and emotional learning needs as we prepare students for postsecondary education and training for work?

### What did GHS do differently?

- Launched 3 pathways - STEAM, Business Studies, Creative Arts and Communication
- Created more flexible schedule opportunities for students
- Expanded early college course offerings (from 3 to 6; enrollment jumped from 59 to 160)
- Rebooted internship program (4 students in 2021, 53 interested students in 2022)

The school counseling department has launched classroom seminars for all grade levels in goal setting, time management, stress management, interest and skill inventories, college/ career exploration, resume writing, college application process, to name a few.

### New opportunities for 2022-2023

- Pathway designation expand from 3 to 5- adding Global Competency Recognition and Community Service Recognition
- Worcester State University joins Early College Partnership - summer courses
- School calendar expanded to 12 months - credit recovery, summer coursework including early college and summer school credit recovery
- Computer Help Desk / IT Training for students
- Performing Arts expanded to include theater arts. New electives could include acting, playwriting, directing, design and production

New elective opportunities include speech and debate, documentary filmmaking, work smarter, not harder, introduction to film analysis, data analysis, technology help desk, acting, directing, playwriting, production/design, introduction to public health, introduction to criminal justice and financial literacy.

### Structural considerations for SY 2022-2023

- Shift to semester grade reporting to mirror higher education reporting schedule - allows teachers to balance assessments, provides students time for recovery from poor grades before grades close, allows more time for students to complete work before grades close.
- All credit recovery opportunities occur during school breaks and summer months.
- Sustain “school from home” /off-campus learning for students enrolled in online courses

### GHS Goal and Projections

- By 2024, 75% of aspiring college students will be enrolled in the Early College Program.
- By 2026, 100% of aspiring college students will be enrolled in at least one AP or Early College.
- By 2026, 100% of graduates will have work or internship experience.

Laura Often is excited about all of the new opportunities for students at GHS. Liz Spinney asked how the concentrations work for students who were already in high school. Most of the students were already working towards a concentration in some area. Are the early college courses weighted? Yes. What are the advantages of early college? Is the goal of getting 75% of kids in an early college program related to SEL or the way colleges look at transcripts? Reaching the 75% will likely occur naturally. Finance aside, does early college coursework give kids an advantage? Yes, it is considered advanced coursework. Jennifer Connelly added that her daughter’s early college courses opened up

more space in her college coursework for a minor. Jennifer Connelly asked about semester grade reporting and what the current GHS transcript looks like. Transcripts show quarter grades. Amy Marr mentioned that some students feel strongly about an area and try an early college course and find that they don't enjoy it after all. Amy Marr asked whether the financial literacy course will be a semester or year long course. Not sure yet.

4. Future Agenda Schedule Planning: SEPAC presented has been confirmed for January 11.

5. Approval of Minutes: n/a

6. Financial Report:

A. Warrant: Jennifer Connelly made a motion to approve Warrant #25 dated 12/16/21 in the amount of \$713,318.53. Laura Often seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

B. FY23 Budget Update: Dr. Cummings met with the Town Administrator. The TA presented a new timeline moving the December deadlines to January.

7. Policy:

GBGA-1 - Staff Vaccination Policy

This is a second reading and was edited for clarification on vaccine requirements for contractors who provide educational services. Those providing educational services and working directly with students will be required to be vaccinated or submit to testing. The policy also added a definition for staff and a reference to the state order. Some comments were received regarding the frequency of the testing. Jennifer Connelly made a motion to accept GBGA-1 Staff Vaccination Policy. Liz Spinney seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0.

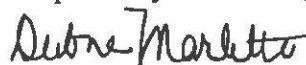
8. Member Reports: Laura Often attended an ARPA meeting last night. Committee interviewed 2 consultants and recommended one to the Select Board. Amy Marr shared that the Select Board drafted a charge regarding the formation of a smaller budget committee.

9. Correspondence: n/a

10. Executive Session: n/a

11. Adjournment: Liz Spinney made a motion to adjourn the meeting. Laura Often seconded the motion. Motion carried 4-0. Meeting adjourned at 9:07 pm.

Respectfully submitted,



Debne Marlette  
Recording Secretary